



Wildfire & the Media

CONCEPT

The media plays an important role in how a wildfire is perceived and how public opinion is formed.

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to:

- identify words that sensationalize
- rewrite statements using facts
- explain the importance of accurate information

METHOD

Have students work in groups to read through their handout and answer the questions on their investigation worksheet.

MATERIALS

- Student Handout
- Student Investigation Worksheet

DURATION

1 – 2 class sessions

Procedure

1. Ask the students to read the *Wildfire & the Media* handout.
2. Discuss the issues surrounding the media and the reporting of wildfires. Discuss the difference between sensationalism and fact.
3. Ask students to read through the sample paragraphs on the *13–Student Investigation Worksheet* and complete Part A.
4. Have students present their answers.
5. Have students replace their underlined words and sentences with more fact-based words and phrases, completing Part B.
6. Have students present their rewritten statements.
7. Have students complete Part C.
8. Have students present their answers.
9. Discuss the answers with the students.

Extensions

Have students research articles about a recent fire. Have them review the information reported and compare how much of the information was sensationalized and how much was fact.

Key Words

Sensationalism